

Summer Solstice: Honoring Anahita, the Mother of Waters

Ritual performed by Three Cranes Grove, ADF for a Grove-only Summer Solstice in 2016. All parts written by Rev. Jan Avende unless otherwise noted.

Lighting the Fire

Born in the Water and Kindled on the Land
Atar, Son of Ahura Mazda!
To the Fire, the Great Fire -
To you I call!

Worthy of Sacrifice you are! Worthy of Prayer!
Worthy of Sacrifice you'll always be!
To the Fire, the Great Fire -
To you I call!

I come with fuel in hand,
with ghee in hand,
That you may be burning, ever burning, ever blazing.
To the Fire, the Great Fire -
To you I call!

Come to me, O Fire, Great Fire.
Through Asha, through right action,
Brighten this work and come to me here!
May you be provided with proper fuel! *fatwood*
May you be provided with proper incense! *incense*
May you be provided with proper nourishment! *ghee*

Atar, Great Fire,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Atar, accept this sacrifice. *offer fatwood, incense, & ghee*

Atar, accept this sacrifice.

Purification

Before we begin his rite, let us wash the mundane from our hands,
and become pure as clean, flowing water.

Celebrants will wash hands in a bowl of water, and dry on a towel

Now...

Look within yourself, and set aside those things that will not serve you in this rite.
Look within yourself, and strip away the disorder that clouds your vision.
Look within yourself, find the center of you, and come be welcome in this sacred space.

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Outdwellers

Now, Children of Earth, we stand with Ahura Mazda,
against the Daevas who sought to destroy the order of our world.
All those who bring druj instead of asha,
chaos instead of order,
stand aside and leave us to our rite in peace!
Accept this as a token of peace between us,
and disturb us not in our rite.
Outdwellers, be at peace! *offer cream*

Outdwellers, be at peace!

Opening Prayer

The spirits of the sky are above us.
The spirits of the land are around us.
The spirits of the waters flow below us.
Surrounded by all the numinous beings of earth and sky and water,
Our hearts tied together as one,
Let us pray with a good fire.

(~Three Cranes Grove, ADF Liturgy)

Purpose & Precedent

We have come together today for the Summer Solstice, when the sun stands at its highest in the sky, to honor the Kindreds on this holy day. As our Ancestors did before us, so we do now; and so may our children do in the future.

We come to honor Ardvi Sura Anahita, the Mother of Waters, Crowned by the Starry Heavens, who rides strong and bright today, pulled by four white horses in her chariot of gold. She who brings the life-giving waters in summer - for her brightness and her glory, we will offer her a sacrifice. So let us come together now, as one folk, and make our offerings in joy and reverence.

Honoring the Earth

The Children of the Earth call out to Zam,
to the Wide-Earth itself.
Within your mountainous reaches,
washed by the waters of the sea
You support all the living beings in your domain.
Integral to the cosmos,
You are the wheel to the chariot of the Heavens.
Home to the Son of the Waters,
in his bright and shining glory,
and home to us as well.
In your domain we are able to offer up sacrifices,

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and so we make this first offering of leaf and grain to you.

Zam, bountiful Earth,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Zam, accept this sacrifice! *offer leaves and grain*

Zam, accept this sacrifice!

Calling for Inspiration

The Children of the Earth call out to Haoma!
Sweet scented and swiftly spreading,
you grow as we pray to your stems and branches!
We speak your praises that we may then
speak the praises of all the Bountiful Immortals!
Where your praise is sung in truth, you come
And so I praise you with my voice:
I praise the clouds that water you,
the rains that nourish you,
and the mountains where you grow.

O yellow one, granter of many blessings,
I make a claim on thee for inspiration!
Your healing liquors flow, inspiring of the pious.
We open ourselves now for the taste of you,
That our mouths be filled with your sweet nectar
inspiring us to strength and glory.
Let our words of praise flow out
like the freshly pressed juice of your being!

O Haoma, golden-hued, you who drive death afar,
we beseech thee, give us your vitality!
You are well-endowed, inherently good,
and beautiful in nature, with your bending sprouts.
We have sat long hours, searching many books
that you may give us knowledge and wisdom.
Haoma, sparkling, milk-white liquor,
for your brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice.
Haoma, accept this sacrifice! *offer incense*

Haoma, accept this sacrifice!

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Attunement

Now, standing in our Nemeton, preparing to do the work ahead, let us take a moment to find our center, and attune ourselves to this space, and to each other. Take a moment to watch your breath, as it flows in and out, deep and regular... As we celebrate the Summer Solstice today, turn your attention to the sky where the bright sunlight is streaming down through the trees and you're enveloped by the heat of the day. Close your eyes now, and allow your attention to be consumed for a moment with the feel of the light and the heat.

Then, notice, streaming down from the heavens, life-giving Waters. Watch with your Vision Eye as droplets fill the air, plunging down through the heat to splash into the Earth. The Earth, having been warmed by the Sun, takes in the Waters and their nourishment, and as the ground is quenched, arising from the soil, comes a mist. Watch with your Vision Eye as these mists arise. These are the Mists of Magic.

As the Mists rise into the air around you, into the heat, feel their cooling vapors caress your skin. As they continue to rise, notice how the sunlight filters through them. And as they crest above your eye level, notice how, all at once, the brilliant Summer Sun is refracted, and a multitude of colors pour out to bathe this space in its rainbow light.

Focus your attention now on those colors, born out of the Mists from mixing the Life-Giving Waters, the Deep Coolness of the Earth, and the Bright Fire in the Sky. Let the colors wash over you, and take their power and magic into yourself. The reds and pinks that are our life-blood and sexuality. The oranges and yellows that bring healing and light to our world. The greens and teals that exemplify nature and magic and art. The blues and purples that fill us with serenity and harmony, and connect our spirit to the world at large. Let this riot of colors, this brilliant diverse rainbow, wash over you as the Mists caress your skin, as you breathe in this magic.

And now, as the Mists sink back to the earth, to pool, swirling on the ground below as we prepare for the work ahead, see those colors merge again back into one. They become a brilliant white light, all colors merging into one unified glow. Expand your awareness now, and remember the people standing around you. Know that they too have been bathed in the colored mists, and are filled now with that white glow. Open your eyes, and see standing about you, your Grove. We are all filled with the Life-Giving Waters, the Cooling Power of the Mists rising from the Earth, and the Bright Sunlight. We stand, united in diversity, as one Sacred Grove.

"The waters support and surround us.
The land extends about us.
The sky stretches out above us.
At our center burns a living flame.
May all the Kindred bless us.
May our worship be true.
May our actions be just.
May our love be pure.
Blessings, honor, and worship to the holy ones."

(prayer: Ceisiwr Serith)

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Recreate the Cosmos

Children of Earth, we now stand at the Center of World, with the Waters flowing about us, the Sky stretched above us, and the Land all about us. The Cosmos was not always in ordered in such a way though...

First the Sky came into being, a great dome arcing above. Then the Waters came, a deep pool below the Sky. Then the Earth was formed, stretching from edge to edge of the great sphere, dividing the Sky from the Waters. With the Land, Sea, and Sky in place, life began to form. First one plant: Gao-kerena, the Tree of Life; then one animal: Gav-aevodata: a Great Bull; and then one Man: Gaya Mareyan. Finally, at the last, came the Fire, burning hot and strong, permeating all the realms, igniting in all places, both seen and unseen.

Then the gods assembled, and through sacrifice created life and brought order to the world. They crushed the Tree, and hundreds upon hundreds of new plants sprang to life. They slaughtered the Bull, and animals of all forms sprang to life. They dismembered the Man, and humanity, in all its races and glory, sprang to life. Thus the vegetable, animal, and human realms were populated and *Asha* - order - was born.

Now in acknowledgement of those primordial sacrifices and to recreate and maintain that cosmic order of the world, so do we bring our own offerings to the Fire and the Water.

Sweet Milk and Leaves we bring for the Waters. *offer Milk and Leaves around the Well*
Let all the Waters flow through this Well,
And through us.
Sacred Waters, Flow within us!

Sacred Waters, Flow within us!

Sweet Incense and Fat we bring for the Fire. *offer Incense and Fat to the Fire*
Let this Fire be kindled in all Realms,
And in us.
Sacred Fire, Burn within us!

Sacred Fire, Burn within us!

Holding all the realms together,
Great Tree of Life, we acknowledge your Sacrifice.
You who stand on the Peaks-Above-the-Eagles,
You who are the Tree of All Seeds
Stand now connecting all Worlds, all Realms, all Life
Sacred Tree, Grow within us!

Sacred Tree, Grow within us!

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Calling the Gatekeeper

Now, Children of Earth, with the Waters flowing through us, and the Fire burning within us, see those powers mix and mingle. It is out of that Fire and those Waters that the Mists of Magic are born. In your mind's eye, let those mists, ethereal and formless, flow out from you and envelop the landscape. Take a moment to breath in those mists, and anchor yourself within this Ordered and Centered Cosmos.

And now, let those mists begin to roll back, to dissipate, revealing a waterway. The sound of the gentle lapping current greets your ears, and the scent of wet, flooded soil and fresh cut trees fills your nostrils. As you gaze out across the waterway, you see a natural dam stretching across the current. Twigs and logs carefully and firmly held together by layers of river mud.

The water beside the dam is calm and tranquil. Then, you notice ripples forming, traveling across the surface of the water, until you catch a glimpse of ears, then nostrils, then a small head cresting the surface, fur glistening with rivulets of waters running down its face.

The creature gracefully swims ashore, coming out of the water, broad flat tail swishing across the mud and it pads softly towards the underbrush. Then, just before reaching cover, it turns, and makes eye contact with you, rising up on it's hind feet, carefully balanced with the aid of it's tail.

This is Beaver. She is graceful, fierce, an ecosystem engineer and a builder of communities.

And now, the Children of the Earth call out to Beaver!
Your warm and glossy fur shining before our eyes.
You take the dry, dying lands of our world
and create a space for all creatures to live and thrive.
Builder of Communities, and Champion of Diversity,
We call to you!
You engineer a world, across all the realms,
Where spirits of all kinds are drawn in by your skill.
Hard-working and clever,
the communal space you nurture is our greatest boon.
Protecting your family and your space:
A welcoming lodge for us all.
Working on the Land, Swimming in the Water,
And floating between the realms,
You draw all creatures in from the edges,
bring all spirits to the Center.
Beaver, Community Builder,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Beaver, accept this sacrifice! *cattails & clover*

Beaver, accept this sacrifice!

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Opening the Gates

And now, Beaver, mix your magic with mine
and aid me in Opening the Gates!

Let this well, filled with the waters flowing across the wide earth,
Join with the the Waters below and open as a Gate.
Our connections with the Ancestors deepen as the Gate is opened.

Let this fire, kindled upon the Land, smoke spiraling up to the Heavens
Join with the Fire there, and open as a Gate.
Our connections with the Shining Ones deepen as the Gate is opened.

Let this tree send it's roots deep into the cosmic Waters Below,
and let it's branches stretch ever upwards and reach for the Fire Above.
This Tree stands at the Sacred Center as a Crossroads between all Worlds,
Allowing our voices and our offerings to travel to all the Spirits

We stand here, connected at the Sacred Center
to all the realms of Land, Sea, and Sky.
Let the Gates be Open!

Let the Gates be Open!

Children of Earth, the Gates are open. Let naught but truth be spoken here.

We now turn our attention to the Kindreds and call first to the Ancestors.

Inviting the Ancestors

The Children of the Earth call out to the Fravashis,
Ancestors and guardian spirits!
You who traveled this world before us
and know its twists and turns.
So do you guide us as we walk this path.
Bountiful Fravashis, who are asha-sanctified.
Heroes and saints, descending to earth to stand by us,
you guard the souls of the living and the dead.
You souls who hold the ancient lore,
sharing its knowledge with those worthy next of kin;
You radiant and overwhelming beneficent spirits;
Grant us succor!
We bring you libations of sweet milk,
in homage and in praise.
Meet us at the boundaries
Be warmed by our Good Fire.
Fravashis, Ancestors, Guardian Spirits,

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for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Fravashis, accept this sacrifice! *offer cream*

Fravashis, accept this sacrifice!

Children of Earth, see in your mind's eye the Fravashis, the Ancestors, stepping out from the mists and joining us here at our sacred fire. As their presence fills our awareness, we turn now to call forth the Spirits of Nature!

Inviting the Nature Spirits

The Children of the Earth call out to the the Yazata,
You Helping Spirits of the Natural World.
To the waters as they rush across the earth,
Springing up and flowing.
To the growing plants of plain and forest,
green and blooming in abundance.
To the heavens above, and all those that dwell there:
Stars and sun and moon.
Wind and rain.
All those lights without beginning or end.
To the creatures that live amongst us,
those that walk the earth, swim in the seas,
wing above, and roam the plains.
To those who dwell in the highest reaches of the mountains,
where snowy peaks are ever whitened,
To those who dwell in gorges and abysses,
where the brightness of the day may never reach.
All you helpings spirits of the Natural world,
Meet us at the boundaries
Be warmed by our Good Fire.
Yazata, Nature Spirits, Helpers & Guides,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Yazata, accept this sacrifice! *offer incense & leafy herbs*

Yazata, accept this sacrifice!

Children of Earth, see in your mind's eye the Yazata, the Nature Spirits, stepping out from the mists and joining us here at our sacred fire. As their presence fills our awareness, we turn now to call forth the Deities!

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Inviting the Shining Ones

The Children of the Earth Call out to the Amesha Spentas!
Shining Ones! Life-giving and Bountiful Immortals!
We call out as praisers and priests,
invoking you as we speak of your glory
and sacrifice to your brightness.
To the Shining Gods and Goddesses
who preside over cattle and wealth,
over order and fire and devotion,
over the bountiful earth and the flowing waters.
You who are tall, fair of form, and self-sufficient.
Conquering the Daevas, you are ever-victorious,
Furthering the world and it's order.
Blissfully filled with asha-endowed splendor,
you overflow with brilliant light.
Meet us at the boundaries
Be warmed by our Good Fire.
Amesha Spentas, Shining Ones, Bountiful Immortals,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Amesha Spentas, accept this sacrifice! *offer ghee & honey*

Amesha Spentas, accept this sacrifice!

Children of Earth, see in your mind's eye the Amesha Spentas, the Shining Ones, stepping out from the mists and joining us here at our sacred fire. As their presence fills our awareness, let us take a moment and welcome in our hearts and minds the Three Kindreds who join us here today in our celebration of the Summer Solstice.
Have the folk brought praise for the Three Kindreds?

We have!

Then, for their brightness and their glory, bring it forth now: speak your praises and make your offerings!

Three Kindred Praise Offerings

folk make offerings. remember to teach them the phrase: "_____, for your brightness and your glory, I offer you a sacrifice"

Inviting the DotO: Ardvi Sura Anahita

Surrounded now by all the Kindreds, we call out especially on this day to the Mother of the Waters.

The Children of the Earth call out to Ardvi Sura Anahita!
Strong, bright, and beautiful,
Your graceful and flowing form sends down,

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both day and night,
Waters that run powerfully all along the earth.
You hold as much Glory as the whole of the Waters.

Sweet Maiden, Mother of Waters,
Pure and glowing with radiance,
You stand in statuesque stillness,
Holding the baresma in hand,
Crowned in the gold of a hundred stars
that shine brilliantly down in eight pure rays.
Clothed in garments of the finest beavers,
worked till their skins shine to the eye
With a full sheen of silver and gold.
All the Waters of the Earth belong to you,
A thousand lakes, and rivers and streams.
Mantled in gold, the wide-expanding Waters,
Worthy of Sacrifice. Worthy of Prayer.
For whom Ahura Mazda made four horses,
Wind, and Rain, and Cloud, and Sleet.
Increasing all things, righteous and victorious.
Crushing down the hates of all haters,
Defeating the Daevas and their ilk.
Your strength and your glory are far-reaching,
Purifying the essence of us all.

O Ardvi Sura Anahita!
come down from those stars,
towards the earth made by Ahura,
towards the sacrificing priest,
Meet us at the boundaries
Be warmed by our Good Fire.
Anahita, Mother of Waters,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Anahita, accept this sacrifice! *offer ghee & honey & herbs*

Anahita, accept this sacrifice!

Children of Earth, see in your mind's eye Ardvi Sura Anahita, the Mother of Waters, flowing out from the mists, radiant and stately, come down from the stars above to join us here at our sacred fire, in our celebration of the Summer Solstice.

Have the Folk brought praise for Anahita?

We have!

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Then, for her brightness and her glory, bring it forth now: speak your praises and make your offerings!

DotO Praise Offerings

folk make offerings. remember to teach them the phrase: "_____, for your brightness and your glory, I offer you a sacrifice"

Prayer of Sacrifice

Children of Earth, we have given of ourselves
in words of praise and in sweet offerings,
and we now seek to speak once more
to all those spirits here gathered,
that they may receive our love,
for they are worthy of sacrifice and worthy of prayer.

Let our voices arise on the Fire,
Let our voices resound in the Well,
Let our voices travel across all the realms,
and pass the boundary into the Otherworld.
Anahita, Kindreds All,
for you brightness and your glory,
we offer you a sacrifice!
Anahita, Kindreds All, accept this sacrifice!

Anahita, Kindreds All, accept this sacrifice!

Omen (water scry)

the divination cup (Cup of Yima) is a abalone shell filled with Waters, which can then be added to the pitcher for the Return Flow

(Priest speaks) We have made offerings for the brightness and the glory of those spirits called to our Fire. It is time now that we seek an omen to see if our offerings were accepted and what we may receive in return. Seer, gaze now, deep into this vessel and see where the whole world is reflected in its depths. See the mists of magic flow in from the edge of our fire, and see them pool within the vessel. Let the Vision fill your Sight. Seer, gaze now and speak to us of the worthiness of our offerings, and what we may receive in return for them.

seer scrys and speaks

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Return Flow

Calling for the Waters

Having given of ourselves, and received wisdom and blessings in return,
we now seek to take of those blessings
to enrich ourselves for the work that is to come.
We seek to fill ourselves with these blessings
so that we may be thusly imbued with the sacred powers
and bring that magic and wisdom into our community and into the world.

Ardvi Sura Anahita is the Mother of Waters,
She grants the ever-flowing, life-giving Waters to all beings,
sending them down, both day and night,
to increase and purify and bless
All the beings of the Earth.

All Waters are by their very nature sacred,
We take these Waters now, in which our blessing was seen,
And set them aside for our use,
Mix them and mingle them into our Cup of Blessing,
pour the Cup of Yima into the pitcher
That we may take these sacred waters into our hearts and our minds.
Anahita, give us the Waters!

Anahita, Give us the Waters!

We call to these Waters as they run powerfully along the Earth,
drawing them forth, to sparkle in the air about us,
That we may feel their cool mist surround us,
And quench our thirst in the Summer's heat with their blessings!
Anahita, give us the Waters!

Anahita, Give us the Waters!

We open our hearts and our minds to the blessings we have been given.
As we stand amongst the Kindreds and our Folk,
United with all the Powers of the Worlds.
Anahita, give us the Waters!

Anahita, Give us the Waters!

Hallowing the Waters

Let the brightness of the Shining, Bountiful Immortals
reflect in these waters the omens we have received.

Let the light pass through these Waters,
and refract into the multitude of blessings we receive.

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Let the blessings in these Waters grow in strength,
and shine with the brilliant power akin to this Summer Solstice Sun.

When we share these Waters
We share our own wisdom and love.
We prepare to do the good work of the Kindreds in the world.

Shining and Bountiful Immortals, we rejoice in your gifts.
Bless our spirits and our lives with your magic and bounty.
Behold, the Waters of Life!

All: Behold, the Waters of Life!

Receiving the Blessing

Children of Earth, before us is the Cup of Blessing.
Do you wish to share in these blessings?

All: We do!

Then, as these Waters are poured out,
know that they contain the blessings of the Kindreds.
As we sing, reflect on how these blessings will fill you
and shine out in your life and our community.

waters are passed and quaffed

“Power of the Spirits”

(~Ian Corrigan)

Power of the Spirits

Flowing through me

Power of the Spirits

Shining in me

Power of the Spirits

Growing with me

Now, having taken the Waters of Life into ourselves,
feel them within you, and know that you are blessed.
So be it!

All: So be it!

And now, having made offerings, and received gifts in return, it is appropriate that we
thank those who we have called.

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Thanking the DotO (Anahita)

Ardvi Sura Anahita, Mother of Waters,
Crowned in a hundred stars and glowing with radiance,
You have shared your the flowing sweetness of yourself with us today.
You are worthy of Sacrifice; worthy of prayer.
Righteous and victorious, crushing down the hates of all haters,
You came down from the stars, sharing your abundance,
Purifying the essence of us all.
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,
Anahita, Mother of Waters, we thank you!

Anahita, Mother of Waters, we thank you!

Thanking the Shining Ones

Amesha Spentas! Shining Ones! Life-giving and Bountiful Immortals!
Victorious ones who preside over cattle and wealth,
over order and fire and devotion,
over the bountiful earth and the flowing waters.
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,
Amesha Spentas, Shining Ones, we thank you!

Amesha Spentas, Shining Ones, we thank you!

Thanking the Nature Spirits

Yazata, Helping Spirits of the Natural World.
Flowing waters and growing plants.
Stars and sun and moon. Wind and rain.
All the creatures that live amongst us,
from highest peak to deepest abyss.
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,
Yazata, Nature Spirits, we thank you!

Yazata, Nature Spirits, we thank you!

Thanking the Ancestors

Fravashis, Ancestors and guardian spirits!
You who traveled this world before us,
who guard the souls of the living and the dead.
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,

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Fravashis, Ancestors, we thank you!

Fravashis, Ancestors, we thank you!

Thanking the Gatekeeper

Beaver, Community Builder, Champion of Diversity,
You have aided us in the work of connecting the realms today,
drawing all creatures out from the edges and us to the Center.
You who work on the Land, swim in the Water,
And float between the realms:
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,
Beaver, we thank you!

Beaver, we thank you!

Closing the Gates

And now, Beaver, we ask for your help in one final task today:
To aid us in Closing the Gates.

Let these Waters, which have flowed across the wide earth,
Draw back up into this vessel here,
No longer a Gate opening to the many ways.

Let this Fire, which was kindled upon the Land, smoke spiraling up to the Heavens
Draw back down to this flame here,
No longer a Gate opening to the many ways.

Let this Tree draw it's roots back from the cosmic Waters Below,
and draw it's branches back from the Fire Above,
No longer standing as the Axis Mundi connecting the Worlds.

Let the Gates be Closed!

All: Let the Gates be Closed!

Children of Earth, the Gates are closed. Let all be as it was before, save for the magic we
have done and the blessings we've received.

Thanking Inspiration

Haoma, sparkling, milk-white liquor,
You have granted us many blessings today,
Filled our mouths with your sweetness,

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inspiring us to strength and glory.
Our words of praise have flowed
like the freshly pressed juice of your being!
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,
Haoma, Inspiration, we thank you!

Haoma, Inspiration, we thank you!

Thanking the Earth

Zam, Bountiful and Wide-Earth.
In your domain we are able to offer up sacrifices,
You are Integral to the cosmos,
The wheel to the chariot of the Heavens.
Home to the Son of the Waters, and Home to us as well.
You have supported us, and all beings throughout this rite,
As you always do.
Your brightness and your glory have brought joy and blessings to us today.
For all you have done, and all you may do in the future,
Zam, Bountiful Earth, we thank you!

Zam, Bountiful Earth, we thank you!

Closing Statements

Children of Earth, this is good work we have done today, honoring Anahita, the Mother of Waters, and celebrating the Summer Solstice. Remember the blessings you have received today, and carry them forth into your lives and into the world. Go now in peace – this rite is ended!